THE RAMADAN NUTRITION GUIDE

Hend Ahmed

2nd Edition - with new sections added & delicious new recipes included

'Fasting is the first principle of medicine; fast and see the strength of the spirit reveal itself.'

- Rumi.

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WELCOME

Asalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmat Allah Wa Barakatu,

Ramadan Mubarak!

We are blessed to have this opportunity to live through this beautiful month! This special month is a time to first and foremost enhance our relationship with Allah. It is also a chance to enhance and optimise our health (+ our food!)

This second edition of The Ramadan Nutrition Guide will help you discover incredible benefits of fasting, top foods we should be eating, foods we should be avoiding, updated food swaps, how to overcome common struggles we encounter throughout the month, new sections on pregnancy & breastfeeding, new and delicious food recipes and a special bonus section at the end for meal planning!

I am truly grateful you have taken the time to read this guide. May Allah make this guide a source of benefit to you and to your families.

May you all have a blessed, fruitful and joyful Ramadan!

Ameen.

Duaas and be well,

Hend

Hend Ahmed
Founder of Fitra Nutrition

DOES YOUR BODY CONTROL YOU, OR DO YOU CONTROL YOUR BODY?

- How is your ability to concentrate or focus for long periods of time?
- How aware are you of your own intuition?
- How often do you impulsively eat or put other substances in your body?

Fasting is one of the well researched methods for regaining control of our mind and body. Thirty (or twenty nine) days of Ramadan is the perfect opportunity for this. We will begin to gain insight and become more self-aware. We will start to realise how reactive we have been to the environment. This allows us more clarity and capability to shift our lives towards a more positive direction.

8 BENEFITS OF FASTING

So what happens to our body when we fast?



1 ENHANCES BRAIN HEALTH

Fasting improves alertness, mood and mental clarity.
It also reduces neuro-inflammation; protecting against neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's.



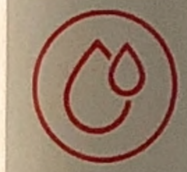
2 SUPER CHARGES OUR ENERGY

Fasting has been shown to boost our energy levels as we use fat for energy instead of carbohydrates. This process happens steadily and consistently – meaning we have more energy and feel better.



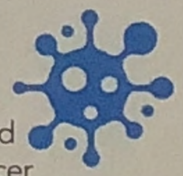
3 WEIGHT LOSS

Several studies have shown that fasting is associated with weight loss. Fasting may increase metabolism and help preserve muscle tissue to reduce body weight and body fat.



4 IMPROVED BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

Fasting improves insulin sensitivity - leading to better regulation of blood sugar levels which is important to reduce insulin resistance which reduces the risk of many diseases, including diabetes and heart disease.



5 SELF-CLEANSING OF CELLS (AUTOPHAGY)

Autophagy breaks down and recycles damaged cells in our body. Increased autophagy may provide protection against several diseases, including cancer and Alzheimer's disease.



6 IMPROVES HEART HEALTH

Fasting has been associated with a lower risk of coronary heart disease and may help lower blood pressure, triglycerides and cholesterol levels.

7 IMPROVES GUT HEALTH

Fasting gives your overworked gut a break from energy-intensive tasks like digesting food. This can influence the balance of beneficial gut flora that protects against insulin resistance reducing the risk of diabetes.





8 FIGHTS INFLAMMATION

Some studies have found that fasting can help decrease levels of inflammation in the body and help promote better health.

TOP FOODS TO EAT





THINK PURPOSE

The food we should eat depends on which meal of the day it is, and the **purpose** we are trying to achieve by eating that meal.

SUHOOR (PRE-DAWN MEAL)

Purpose: Gives us strength, vitality and sustainability.
This meal should be wholesome and filling. Suhoor is the body's primary source of energy during the fasting day.

IFTAR (POST-SUNSET MEAL)

Purpose: Re-balance and recharge our bodies
Iftar is the time to replenish energy levels so every effort should be made to eat food from all major food groups.

To optimise and benefit from fasting, we must incorporate a diverse diet which includes all the major food groups - protein, vegetables, whole grains, nuts & seeds, fruits and dairy products (if tolerated).

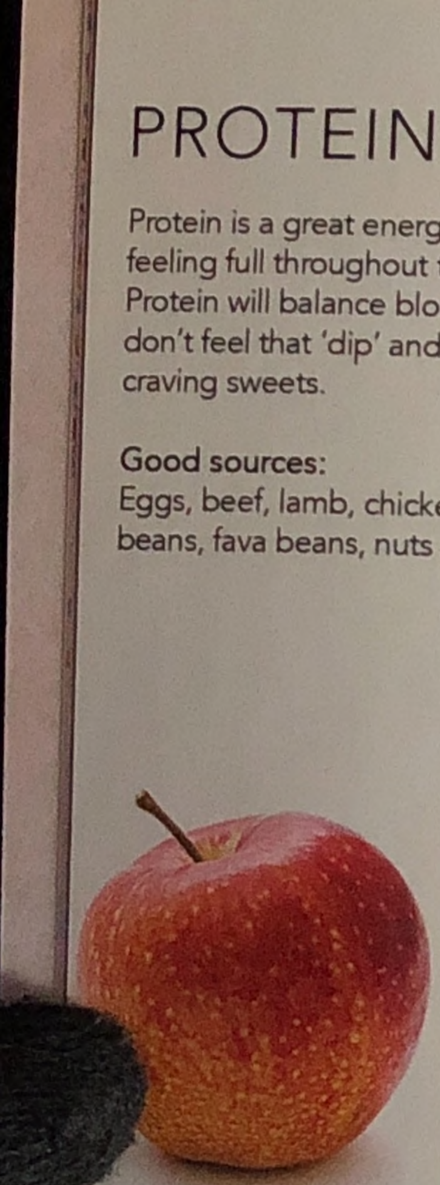


PROTEIN

Protein is a great energy source and will keep you feeling full throughout the day.
Protein will balance blood sugar levels so you don't feel that 'dip' and this can prevent you from craving sweets.

Good sources:
Eggs, beef, lamb, chicken, fish, lentils, chickpeas, beans, fava beans, nuts and seeds.





COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

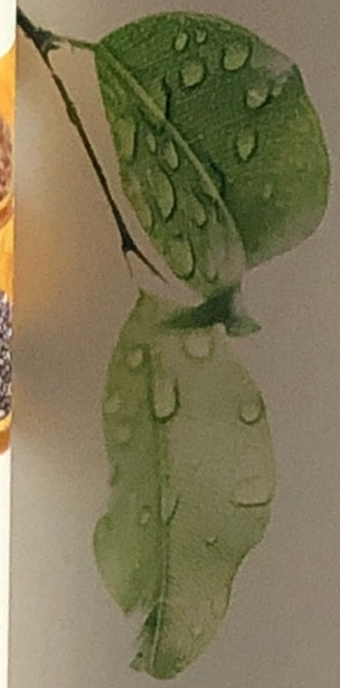
These are unrefined carbohydrates that are rich in fibre. They also release energy slowly throughout the day.

Good sources:
1. Starchy carbohydrates – grains: Oats, quinoa, brown rice, buckwheat, freekeh and bulgur.
2. Starchy carbohydrates – starchy vegetables: Sweet potatoes, carrots, beets, pumpkin and squash.
3. Complex carbohydrates - other vegetables: green leafy vegetables, onions, tomatoes, peppers.
4. Fruit: Dates, berries, apples, plums, pears, bananas.

HEALTHY FATS

Eating the right kind of fat is absolutely essential for good health and good bodily function. Not only are fats essential for energy and survival, they are also important in immune function, maintaining healthy skin and hair and helping us absorb the fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K) which are highly important for our health.

Good sources:
Extra virgin olive oil, Coconut oil, Butter (unsalted)/ butter ghee, flaxseeds, chia seeds, oily fish (wild salmon, fresh or tinned sardines in olive oil), avocados, nuts and seeds (unroasted, unsalted – walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pistachio, brazil nuts, cashews, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds)



HYDRATION

Adequate hydration is extremely important. This will prevent dehydration and provide your body with essential fluids.

Aim for around 2 litres (6-8 glasses) of liquids per day (this can include decaffeinated herbal teas). Also, consider consuming hydrating vegetables e.g. cucumbers, lettuce, courgettes, celery and watermelon as they are high in fibre and filled with great hydrating properties.

FLAVOURINGS

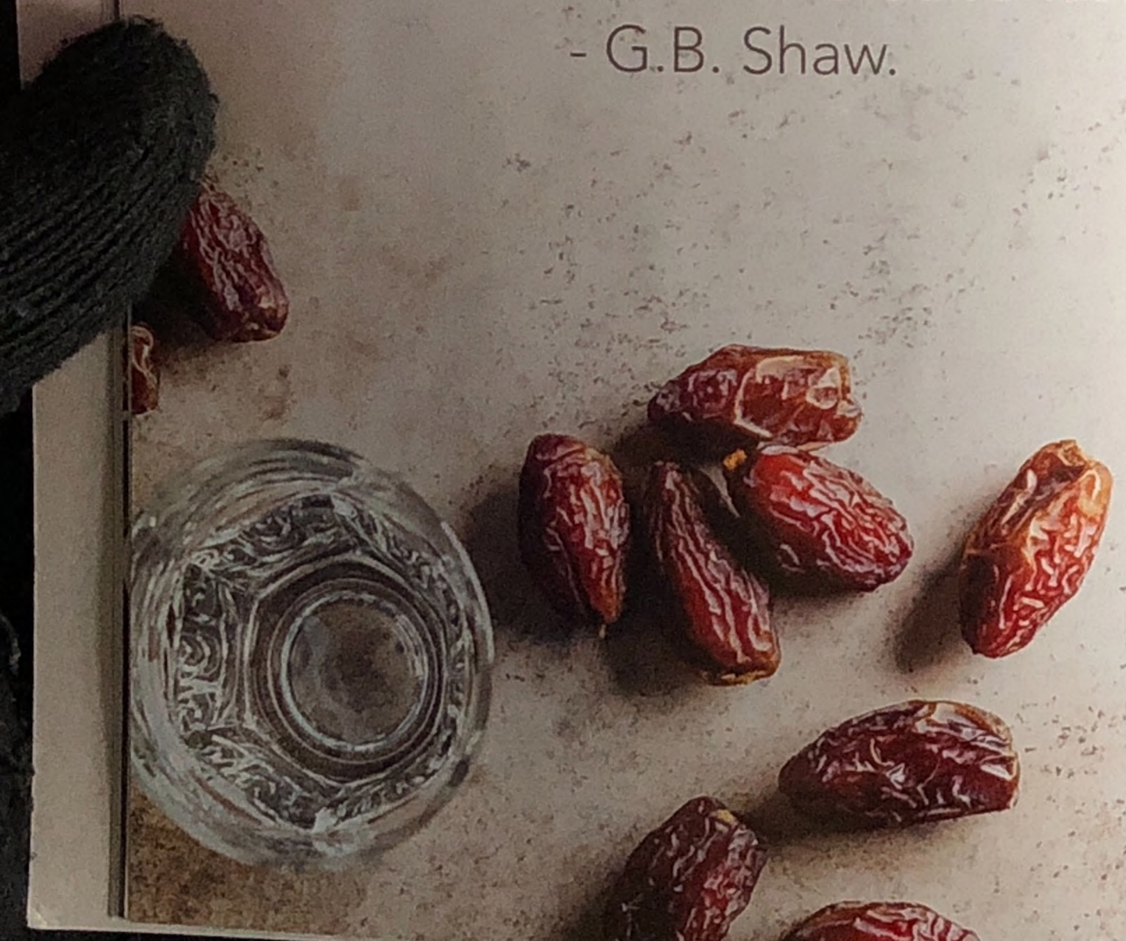
Sprinkling herbs and spices on foods not only adds a burst of flavour but also promotes immense health benefits which include antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Good sources:
Garlic, fresh ginger, cinnamon, turmeric, black pepper, other spices and fresh herbs – especially parsley, coriander, oregano, rosemary and thyme.



THE IDEAL WAY TO BREAK OUR FAST

"Every fool can fast, but only the wise man knows how to break a fast."
- G.B. Shaw.



As we know, breaking our fast with dates and water is ideal. Dates are nutrient powerhouses making them an excellent food-item to break your fast with. It not only helps you hydrate quickly, but gives you instant energy to make you feel rejuvenated after long hours of fasting.



Afterwards, consuming soup is a good option. Soup is a great opportunity to incorporate an abundance of vegetables and replenish those vital nutrients. It would be fantastic if the base is bonebroth. Bone broth is rich in collagen and full of minerals such as calcium and magnesium, which can help with muscle contraction and relaxation, as well as amino acids for improved muscle, gut and joint repair.

WHAT SHOULD MY IFTAR PLATE LOOK LIKE?



SOURCE: BANT 2017 WELLBEING GUIDELINES

After soup, fill your plate with an array of colours and textures. Half your plate should be all types of vegetables, ¼ of your plate protein and the other ¼ wholegrains.

The UK 5-a-day target of fruits and vegetables should be seen as a minimum – research is showing the benefits of eating a much higher amount for example 7 or more portions of vegetables and fruit per day.

FOODS WE SHOULD LIMIT



Iftar is a joyful occasion to enjoy the presence of those around you, while nourishing yourself with food that has been lovingly prepared. Keeping a balanced and moderate approach on what and how much you eat will help ensure that you feel nourished through your mind, body and spirit.

SIMPLE OR REFINED CARBOHYDRATES:
Why? These are foods that last only 3 to 4 hours and they are low in essential nutrients.
Examples: sugars, white flour, pastries, donuts, croissants

SALTY FOOD:
Why? An imbalance of sodium levels in the body increases thirst.
Examples: salted nuts, pickles, chips and food that contain soya sauce

CAFFEINATED DRINKS:
Why? Caffeine has a very individualistic response to different people. If you are already a moderate coffee drinker, studies have shown it does not appear to cause dehydration. With that being said, it can increase wakefulness and irritability in some people. Therefore, monitor your reactions and address accordingly.
Examples: coffee and tea

HIGH SUGAR FOODS, PROCESSED & CARBONATED DRINKS:
Why? Contains high amounts of sugar. Sugary and high carbohydrate diets a pro-inflammatory and inflammation is an important contributory factor to mar health conditions. It also spikes blood sugar levels which may trigger sugar cravings

SUNFLOWER/CORN/SOYBEAN OILS:
Why? These oils are all high in inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids so are best avoided at all times. They can increase the impact of fatigue and exhaustion.

FRIED-FOODS:
Why? Greasy and fried food should be avoided because they contain a very high fat content. Usually cooked in oils high in omega-6 e.g. sunflower, corn s. High temperatures may damage oil resulting in altered fats.

SIMPLE SWAPS

A few simple changes can affect you positively. It's all about the little steps we take that can help us in the long term.

Ketchup ⇨ Salsa



The store-bought ketchup is loaded with high fructose corn syrup which
known to be a factor in many health concerns including obes
diabetes, heart disease and much more. Swapping ketch
for salsa is a simple and efficient way to add instant flav
to the same dishes. Salsa, especially fresh made on
is easy to find in the shops but just make sure you look f
options with no added sugars - or better make your ow

Fizzy Drinks ⇨ Sparkling Water

Drinking fizzy drinks can trigger sweet cravings sparking a vicious cycle of
eating sweet foods and drinks. Studies have linked fizzy drink consumption
an increased risk for heart disease and diabetes, as well as to rising rates o
obesity. You can create a delicious and flavourful alternative by just adding
lemons, oranges, watermelon, cucumber, mint, or limes to sparkling water

Milk Chocolate ⇨ Dark Chocolate

If you are going to eat chocolate, just make sure you eat the good k d.
The truth of the matter is that milk chocolate is not
actually chocolate, it's sugar. If you are making a swap,
start out at a minimum of 70% dark chocolate
and work your way up.
The more your tastes buds shift,
the more you will actually enjoy the taste
of chocolate and not the added sugar.
Aim for quality over quantity!



Table Salt ⇨ Himalayan Salt
Sea Salt

Some amount of salt is important for us to help maintain certain functions.
Table salt is usually highly refined — meaning most of its impurities and
trace minerals are removed and artificial additives are added. Whereas sea
salt and Himalayan salts are minimally processed. Himalayan salt even
contains 84 different minerals and trace elements.
Note: still consume minimally and in moderation.

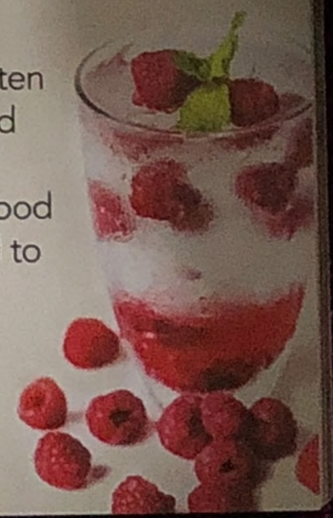


Sunflower oil
Vegetable oil
Margarine
⇨ Extra virgin olive oil
Coconut oil
Grass fed butter/Ghee

Sunflower oils/vegetable oils/margarine are highly processed and production
may have resulted in damaged fats. Whereas extra virgin olive oil is a
heart-healthy monounsaturated fat and a powerful antioxidant that can fight
inflammation. Keep in mind that switching to healthier oil in cooking does not
necessarily mean reducing its flavour. You can enhance the seasoning of your
dishes by using fresh vegetables, fresh herbs and spices.

Fruit juices
(even 100% fruit juice)
⇨ Lemon/cucumber/berry
infused water

In order to make fruit juices, the skin and pulp are often
removed. This reduces the number of nutrients and
leaves a more concentrated source of sugar.
This concentrated source of sugar produces large blood
glucose and insulin responses which can be harmful to
our health.



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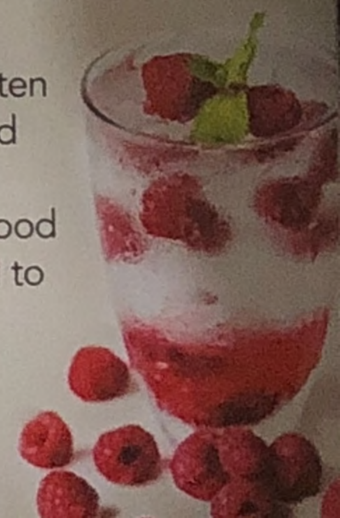
- Sunflower oil
- Vegetable oil
- Margarine

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Coconut oil
Grass fed butter/Ghee

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This concentrated source of sugar produces large blood glucose and insulin responses which can be harmful to our health.





[SIMPLE SWAPS

Cereals
Yogurts
Cereal bars

⇨

Homemade Granola
Plain Yogurt
Chia Seed Pudding

Even foods that are considered 'healthy' may have high quantities of added sugar. For example yoghurts, breakfast cereals (including mueslis) and cereal bars. When checking food labels be aware that sugar comes under many names and a food may contain many different types. Here are some examples of other names for sugar: sucrose, glucose, fructose, lactose, malt or syrup.

White Sugar

⇨

Good Quality Honey
(pure, raw, local)

Whether it be white sugar, brown sugar, coconut sugar or honey – the body still detects them all as sugar; spiking blood sugar levels & increasing insulin levels. However, if you consume honey, you'll receive the benefits that come with it. It contains traces of vitamins and minerals, antimicrobial properties and may help ease coughing and sore throats. Remember, honey still consists primarily of sugar and should be used sparingly.



White Refined Grains
(white flour, white rice, white bread, cereals, crackers, desserts and pastries)

⇨

Whole Grains
(whole-wheat flour, bulgur, oats, and brown rice)

With carbohydrates, quality - not quantity - matters mos
Whole grains are better sources of fibre and other important nutrie
selenium, potassium and magnesium. In contrast to whole grains, re
are milled; a process that strips out both the bran and germ to give
texture and longer shelf life. The refining process also removes mar
including fibre. These processed foods will not keep your blood su
balanced, which is why you will be hungry again soon after consu

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COMMON STRUGGLES IN RAMADAN

Throughout Ramadan we may face many challenges. As striving Muslims, we need to ensure that we are able to overcome certain struggles in order to aid us towards making the most of this blessed month and fulfilling our duties towards Allah, ourselves and to our loved ones. This section will briefly suggest ways to tackle common struggles we all may face by simply understanding the root causes of these issues.



'There's a hidden
sweetness
in the stomach's
emptiness.'
- Rumi.

Fasting is truly a blessed Divine prescription
and a renewal opportunity like
no other for the body.

Have you felt this hidden sweetness?



DEHYDRATION

With the long days of fasting, there's no question that adequate hydration is important, as water is critical to maintain our bodily functions. Headaches and constipation are often symptoms of dehydration. Therefore it is important to maintain good hydration to avoid further complications.

Alongside drinking adequate water roughly between 6-8 cups of water daily here are a few tips that will help you stay hydrated during Ramadan and control your thirst during fasting. It's important to note that the food you eat can play a major role in controlling your thirst.

1 DRINK SOLE WATER

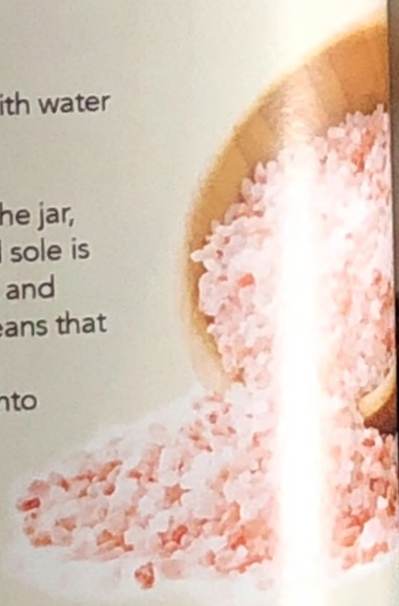
Sole (pronounced So-lay) is water that is heavily saturated with a natural salt. Salt has a bad reputation for causing high blood pressure but having a good-quality salt such as Himalayan salts, used in moderation, may actually support your health.

Himalayan Sea Salt known as 'pink sea salt' is used in sole and it contains roughly 84 trace elements found in the body and is considered one of the purest salt available on earth.

Sole helps with dehydration as it regulates the water content throughout your body. It allows the body to absorb and use the water that you are consuming.

Easy method:

1. Fill a glass jar ¼ of the way with Himalayan Salt and fill with water (ideally purified water)
2. Let sit overnight.
3. The next day, if there is still some salt on the bottom of the jar, the water has absorbed its maximum amount of salt and sole is ready to use. (If all of the salt is absorbed, add more salt and continue doing so each day until some remains. This means that the water is fully saturated with the salt)
4. Take **ONE teaspoon** of this saturated mixture and put into **a glass of water** to drink at Iftar.



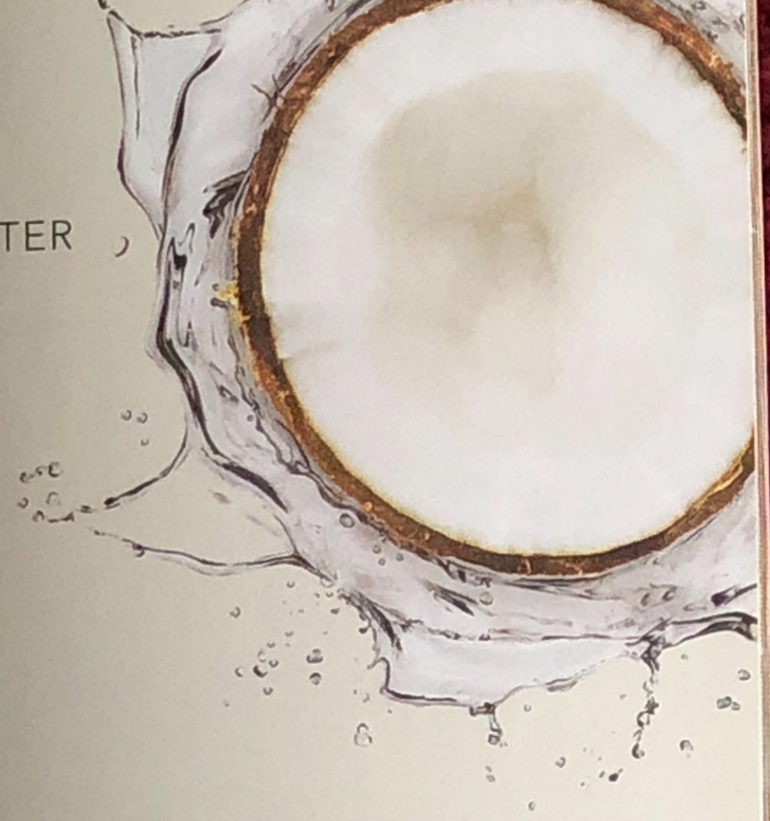
Note: Do not add more than one teaspoon. Do not drink more than one glass of sole a day. If it causes a headache or any other reaction, stop and consult a doctor. As with any health advice, consult a qualified practitioner if concerned especially if pregnant, breastfeeding or impaired renal function or any medical condition.

2 DRINK COCONUT WATER

Coconut water is high in potassium, and such a great electrolyte replacement in hydration.

Note: It should not replace plain water, but it can be a great alternative to other beverages.

Be sure to read the ingredients to verify you're getting 100% coconut water as some bottled brands contain added sugar or flavouring agents.



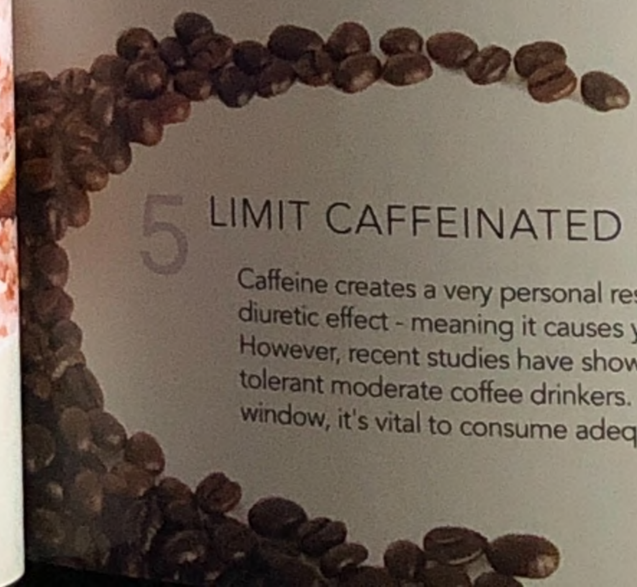
3 CONSUME SOUP & HYDRATING FOODS

Soups are a good source of fluids. Also hydrating fruits and vegetables like cucumbers, lettuce, courgettes, celery and watermelon are known for their high content of water which can help reduce thirst.

4 LIMIT HOT, SPICY & SALTY DISHES

Hot, spicy & salty dishes cause water retention and therefore increase the body's need for water and increase thirst.





5 LIMIT CAFFEINATED DRINKS

Caffeine creates a very personal response to each individual. Caffeine does have a mild diuretic effect - meaning it causes your kidneys to flush extra water through urination. However, recent studies have shown it does not appear to cause dehydration for already tolerant moderate coffee drinkers. With that being said, because of the narrow eating window, it's vital to consume adequate hydration within the non-fasting hours.

TIREDNESS & LACK OF CONCENTRATION

Two of the most common challenges that we find ourselves dealing with during Ramadan are fatigue and lack of concentration. This is especially more challenging for students, working professionals and busy parents.

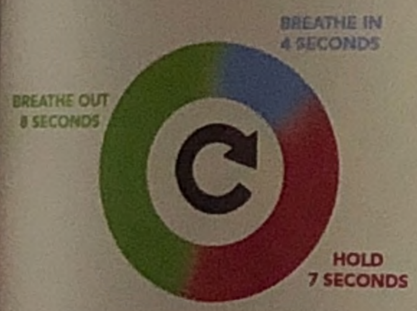
EAT SUHOOR

Having suhoor might not seem like enough to be able to get you through the day, but Allah puts immense blessings in the food you eat at Suhoor and it's miraculous. This is therefore a meal you should never miss! See the previous section to know what types of food to eat and see the recipe guide for examples of Suhoor options.



Peanut Butter Chia Pudding with cacao nibs and berries - see the recipe guide!

BREATHING TECHNIQUES



The way we breathe can affect our energy levels and our alertness. Breathing deeply can improve gas exchange. There are many techniques available. One method is called '4-7-8' Breathing Technique:

- Breathe in slowly but deeply.
- Take 4 seconds to breathe in, feeling your stomach move in the process.
- Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
- Breathe out for 8 seconds, as silently as you can manage.
- Once you reach a count of 8, you should have completely emptied your lungs of air. Repeat as many times as you need, making sure to stick to the 4-7-8 pattern.

LIGHT EXERCISE

Light exercise like a short walk before Iftar or before Suhoor can give you a boost of energy instead of wearing you down.



SLEEP

Too little and too many hours of sleep can cause your body to experience fatigue. Research states that the **quality** of sleep is **just as** or potentially **more** important than the hours of sleep.
One tip is to go to sleep early - for example immediately after Taraweeh prayer. You will then feel refreshed for Suhoor. Taking a 10 – 20 minute short power nap after Dhuhr prayer can also help you stay energised and engaged throughout your day.



INDIGESTION & ACID REFLUX (HEARTBURN)

Stomach acid is essential to healthy digestion. The breakdown and absorption of nutrients occurs at optimum rate only within a narrow range of acidity in stomach. If there isn't enough acid, the normal chemi reactions required to absorb nutrients is impaired.

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR & RAW LEMON JUICE

These are time-tested traditional remedies that often relieve the symptoms of heartburn by increasing the acidity of your stomach - this increases pepsin which is the enzyme that breaks down protein.
Directions: Add one - two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar with a glass of water immediately before meals.



ADD 'BITTERS' FOOD TO YOUR DIET

Examples include fennel, ginger, peppermint. They stimulate acid production in the stomach and improve digestion.

AVOID DRINKING WATER WHILE YOU EAT

This will dilute stomach acid, which will hinder digestion and nutrient absorption.

AVOID OVEREATING

It's important to eat in moderation, as well as eating slowly and chewing food properly. Digestion actually begins when you start chewing food in your mouth.

AVOID OILY, DEEP-FRIED, VERY SPICY FOOD & CAFFEINE

Highly processed and refined foods can inflame the gut and lead to indigestion.

AVOID BENDING OVER OR LYING DOWN AFTER EATING

Food digestion can be affected if lying down.

WEIGHT GAIN

Weight gain is very complex and multi-factorial. Let's take a look at some of the ways unintentional weight gain can be avoided.



1 BREAK YOUR FAST RIGHT

Break your fast with dates and water. Then pray Maghrib so your body can get ready for food. After Maghrib prayers, continue with soups and salads, then move onto your main dish. This way you will eat a nutrient dense foods at the beginning and it'll postpone the need to eat simple, refined carbohydrates.

2 PLAN PLAN PLAN

Make a plan for your food. Are you going to eat a balanced and nutritious iftar and do you have healthy and sustainable suhoor options in your kitchen? Also make a plan for your workout - could you fit in some cardio before iftar, and some weight training after?
Make a plan for your sleep. Will you sleep early and wake up for suhoor, or sleep late and nap before iftar? It's important to secure 7-8 hours of sleep in Ramadan as sleep deprivation makes us hungrier.

3 AVOID OVEREATING

Break your fast with foods that are high in fibre and protein. Also, look out for unhealthy food choices you wouldn't typically make outside of Ramadan only because you feel you deserve them after a long day's fast. Incorporate healthy protein such as fish, chicken, lean meat, chickpeas and beans in your main meal along with complex carbohydrates such as brown rice, freekeh, or bulgur. This will stabilise your blood sugar and prevent overeating.

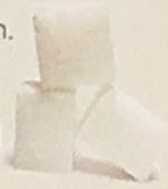
4 HYDRATE

Drinking enough fluids will not only keep you from becoming dehydrated while you fast, but it will also control your sugar cravings after you break your fast. Limit diuretics such as coffee or black tea as they'll only serve to dehydrate your body further. Replace them with herbal teas that make a great alternative to water and may aid your digestion.



5 AVOID EXCESS SUGAR

High sugar intake lies at the top of the list of reasons for weight gain in Ramadan. This Ramadan, challenge yourself to only eat naturally occurring sugars such as fruits, molasses and honey. If you really want to eat that sweet dessert, then eat moderately and in a balanced matter. Enjoy a fruit salad, fruit smoothie or dried fruits instead of traditional Arabic or Asian sweets.





6 EAT GOOD QUALITY FATS

Adding good healthy fats into your diet will reduce the amount we overeat. What's important is avoiding unhealthy fats whenever possible e.g. deep fried foods, margarine, pastries.
Instead, reduce the amount of unhealthy fat in your meals by stewing with some olive oil, baking, roasting, steaming or grilling. Also, try adding avocados on top your salad, maybe sprinkle some sunflower seeds in your soup or dash some olive oil in your dressings and sauces to include those good healthy fats.

7 KEEP ACTIVE

Ramadan doesn't have to be a time of weight gain and laziness. Cardio and training should continue to be part of your schedule. Make sure that during the fasting day you get 15 to 45 minutes of light cardio like walking or shopping. Continue to strength train to prevent muscle loss. You can still keep lifting weights - just move your training schedule to after iftar.



8 DON'T SKIP SUHOOR

The blessings of Suhoor are immense. Not having suhoor may worsen hunger the next day and make you more prone to overeating for iftar. A balanced suhoor is composed of complex carbs such as whole grain bread or oats instead of white refined bread, and contains a good source of protein such as eggs or cheese. This combination ensures a stable level of glucose in your blood that will sustain you until iftar.

Creamy Quinoa Porridge - see the recipe guide!

EARLY SATIETY & UNINTENTIONAL WEIGHT LOSS

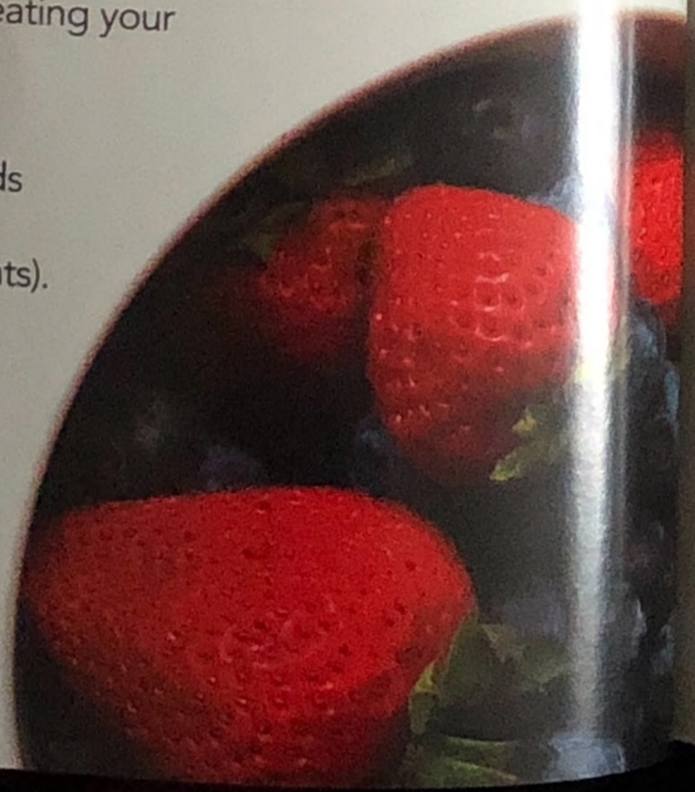
Early satiety is very common in Ramadan. It is when you feel full after a few bites of food or before you finish a 'normal' sized meal. This can lead to insufficient energy uptake and nutrients. This can also hinder protein, iron and vitamin B12 intake which can all affect energy levels and weight.

Try to avoid simple carbohydrates and sugary foods at iftar. This includes pastries, cookies, chocolates and carbonated drinks. They result in early satiety but also sudden hunger afterwards.

Space meal portions out throughout the evening after iftar to ensure your stomach is receiving the nutrients gently.

Avoid drinking water whilst eating your meals as this will fill you up unnecessarily.

Focus on nutrient dense foods (foods that carry the greatest amount and variety of nutrients). These include various foods such as whole vegetables, chicken, lamb, beef, wild salmon, eggs, lentils, beans, sweet potatoes, blueberries and other berries and nuts & seeds.



CAFFEINE WITHDRAWAL

Caffeine withdrawal in Ramadan can occur in anyone who regularly consumes caffeine and then abruptly discontinues its use. Common symptoms include headache, fatigue, low energy, irritability, anxiety, poor concentration, depressed mood and tremors. These symptoms can last anywhere from two to nine days.

Thankfully, there are ways to reduce these symptoms:



CUT BACK GRADUALLY BEFORE RAMADAN

Quitting abruptly may shock the body and make withdrawal symptoms worse. Gradually weaning off caffeine before Ramadan starts can reduce the chances of experiencing unpleasant effects.

REDUCE CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES

If you're used to drinking full-strength coffee, start drinking half-decaf, half-regular coffee to slowly reduce your dependence. Or you could even swap one of your coffees for a decaffeinated herbal tea.

STAY HYDRATED

Drinking enough water is crucial when cutting out caffeine. Dehydration can worsen symptoms of withdrawal, such as headache and fatigue.

SWEET TREATS & CRAVINGS

Cravings are thought to be a combination of social, cultural, psychological, and physiological factors. They can be a major barrier for optimal health for many individuals. Many of our cravings are for processed foods (made of processed oils, sugars, salt and chemicals), which send messages to our brain leading to addiction of sugary and salty foods.

Rather than thinking about how to stop food cravings, let's think instead about how we can really nourish our bodies:

Check out the dessert section of the recipe guide for healthy options that hit the spot!

FOCUS ON NUTRIENT DENSITY

A diverse gut microbiota tends to be a healthy microbiota. A diversified, nutrient-dense diet provides substrates to a wide range of microbes that can support health. Many people find that their cravings subside substantially after adopting a nutrient-dense diet. Whereas a high calorie, low nutrient-dense diet based on processed foods doesn't allow our bodies to get the proper nutrition it needs.

MACRONUTRIENT INTAKE

Most people with significant cravings are often restricting at least one of their macronutrients (either carbohydrates, fats or protein) even if it's by accident. Try increasing the macronutrient that you're restricting with healthy, real food choices and see if that helps.

REGULATE BLOOD-SUGAR LEVELS

An unbalanced diet with processed food can cause blood sugar fluctuations, which can leave us feeling deprived and can increase our cravings. Eating extra protein can help reduce cravings since protein stabilises blood sugar.



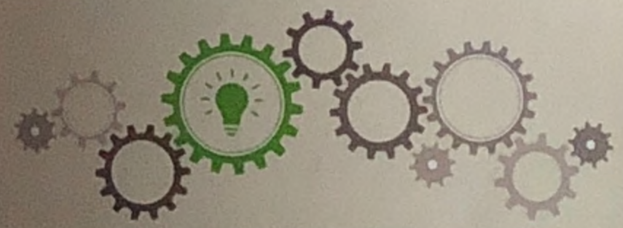
THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Mind-body connection plays a really big part here. Mindfulness and mind-body activities can help us cultivate awareness around eating and food. These activities can also reduce stress, which can decrease the amount we eat. Types of activities include things like deep breathing, meditation, yoga, mindfulness and tai chi.

DIABETES

Type I diabetics or Type II diabetics who are using insulin should definitely speak to their GP before fasting and are generally advised not to fast. Individuals who have their diabetes under control, either by diet or by medication should also seek advice from their GP before fasting as GP's may make a few changes to their medication.

Regular self-monitoring of blood glucose is strongly advised. Low blood sugar levels (hypoglycaemia) is dangerous, and if untreated may lead to confusion, seizures or visual disturbances, and hence must be strictly avoided. Feeling dizzy, sweaty and disorientated may all suggest hypoglycaemia. If this is suspected, treatment involves quick steps to get your blood sugar level back into a normal range either with high-sugar foods or drinks or with medications.



A general point about illness and fasting; chapter 2, verse 184 of the Qur'an makes it explicitly clear that people who have an illness or a medical condition that makes fasting dangerous to their health are exempt from fasting. To compensate for the missed fasts, they must fast later when they are able; if this is not possible due to long-term illness, they must pay a charitable contribution as compensation. This form of compensation is known as fidyah. Please consult an Islamic scholar for further details.

PREGNANCY & BREASTFEEDING

A question we often get - to fast or not during pregnancy and breastfeeding?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach as it is a very personal decision and will depend on your own circumstances, such as the stage of pregnancy, how you are feeling and if you have experienced any problems so far in your pregnancy.

In addition, the time of year Ramadan falls (e.g. during long hot summer days) and other commitments may also affect your decision. You will need to speak with your doctor or midwife who have full knowledge of issues relating to your pregnancy.

According to Islamic law, pregnant women are allowed to not fast during Ramadan. To compensate for the missed fasts, they must fast later when they are able; if this is not possible, then must pay a charitable contribution as compensation. This form of compensation is known as fidyah. Please consult an Islamic Scholar for further details.

If you do decide to fast, make sure you let your midwife and/or doctor know so that they can offer you some advice and perform any necessary health checks.

Here a few tips that can help you:

- You may wish to consider fasting on some but not all days of the month, for example, fasting on alternate days or at weekends to make it more manageable.

- Dehydration is something to look out for. Feeling thirsty or having dark-coloured urine can be early signs of dehydration, other symptoms may include dizziness, headache, tiredness, dry mouth and passing small amounts of urine infrequently. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water at suhoor and iftar and staying cool in the shade.

- Eat well-balanced meals at suhoor and iftar (see the recipe guide)

- Avoid activities that will leave you physically exhausted while fasting. Take plenty of rest and sleep well.

- Remember to take folic acid (methyfolate) and vitamin D (Vitamin D3) supplements.

- If you feel like something isn't quite right, contact your doctor or midwife.

Bottom line: the impact of fasting during pregnancy may depend on the overall health of the mother, the stage of pregnancy and the time of year Ramadan occurs. As an individual, you need to assess the situation for yourself with your doctor/midwife.

Breastfeeding and fasting

A similar rule applies to breastfeeding women. Again, Islamic law states that breastfeeding mothers do not have to fast. Missed fasts must be compensated for by fasting at a later date, or fidyah, once breastfeeding has stopped.

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THE SHOPPING LIST

Food shopping without a plan rarely works out. Here's a guideline for you to use as you navigate those supermarket aisles! Include & exclude according to your preferences.

VEGETABLES

- Avocado
- Aubergine
- Beetroot (raw or cooked)
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Courgettes
- Corn, baby cobs or kernels
- Garlic
- Green beans
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Leeks
- Mangetout/sugar snap peas
- Mushrooms
- Onions (yellow + red)
- Peas (frozen)
- Peppers – red, yellow, green
- Potatoes
- Rocket
- Spinach
- Spring onions
- Sweet potato

FRUIT

- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries (fresh or frozen)
- Lemons/Limes
- Oranges
- Plums
- Pears
- Tomatoes (salad/cherry/plum)



DAIRY & EGGS

- Butter
- Cheese
- Free-range Eggs (organic if possible)
- Full fat plain yogurt/ kefir (if tolerated)
- Ghee

MEAT & FISH

- Chicken (organic)
- Lamb / beef (organic)
- Mackerel (oily fish)
- Wild salmon (oily fish)
- White fish fillets (e.g. cod, haddock)
- Fresh/tinned sardines in olive oil (oily fish)
- Tuna (tinned in spring water)

PULSES

- Brown lentils
- Cannellini beans
- Chick peas
- Kidney beans
- Red split lentils

Always choose the organic options where possible - this means fewer pesticides, no artificial colours or preservatives and no genetically modified ingredients.



NUTS & SEEDS

- Almonds
- Brazil nuts
- Chia
- Flaxseed (milled)
- Hazelnuts
- Walnuts
- Pistachio
- Pumpkin seeds
- Sunflower seeds

CUPBOARD STORES

- Balsamic, apple cider vinegar
- Coconut flour
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Ground almonds
- Oats
- Olives
- Organic Stock cubes
- Tomatoes (canned or passata)
- Virgin Coconut oil

GRAINS

- Brown rice
- Burghul
- Freekah
- Pearl barley
- Quinoa



Do your bit for the planet & remember to bring your own bag!

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THE RAMADAN
RECIPE GUIDE

SUHOOR



Banana Baked Oats

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Serves: 3-4

Give this healthy banana bread baked oats recipe a try for suhoor when you're looking f something easy, quick, and protein packed! Make sure to make this the night before so y can just dive in when you get up for suhoor! Made with oats, ripe bananas, and a little honey for natural sugar.

INGREDIENTS

- ups oats
- baking powder
- cinnamon
- tsp salt
- 2 mashed bananas
- 2 eggs
- 1½ cup milk (or plant-based milk)
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180C (375F) and line a 8×8 pan with parchment paper.

2. In a small bowl, combine oats, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Stir well.

3. In a large bowl, mash bananas until completely soft. the banana bowl, whisk in eggs, then stir in milk, honey vanilla.

4. Add oat mixture to banana-egg ingredients and stir to combine.

5. If you want to add in walnuts (or other nuts and seeds) you can add them now.

6. Pour into pre-prepared dish and bake for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown.

7. Let cool before cutting.

8. Top with chopped bananas and drizzle some tahini and date syrup.



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2 cups oats
1 tsp baking powder
2 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp salt
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2 eggs
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¼ cup honey
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Coconut & Cacao Date Balls

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 20 balls

Date balls (sometimes called energy balls) have taken over the world by storm in recent years. They are packed with nutrition and energy and are super easy to make! Energy ba are so versatile that you could create a different version every day for the rest of Ramada

INGREDIENTS

½ cup dates (pits removed)
½ cup almond butter (or peanut butter)
1 cup oat flour (blend oats in a blender)
½ cup cacao powder
½ cup dessicated coconut
2 tsp honey
1 tsp vanilla
Cacao powder and desiccated coconut for coating

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Process all ingredients except the dates and the vanil extract in a food processor for about 10-20 seconds.

2. Add the dates and the vanilla extract, blend again unt the mixture holds together when you press it between yo fingers. If it's too dry add a few more dates.

3. Use about 1 tbsp of the mixture to roll a ball betwee your hands. Continue until no dough is left (recipe make about 20 balls).

4. I rolled the balls in desiccated coconut and cacao powder but you can roll them in powdered sugar or cinnamon.

5. Store in the fridge.



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Creamy Quinoa Porridge

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

Serves: 2

Trust me, if you haven't had quinoa as a porridge yet, you are missing out BIG TIME. It is jam packed with protein and fibre that will keep you energised throughout the da I usually include some oats in there for the complex carbohydrates intake – but you can omit it if you want a gluten free version (or you can add gluten free oats instead).

Play around with the recipe and jazz it up with anything you have in your kitchen.

INGREDIENTS

½ cup uncooked quinoa
3 tbsp oats (gluten free oats if intolerant/sensitive)
1 tbsp ground flaxseed
½ tsp cinnamon
1 cup milk of choice (I prefer coconut milk)
1 ½ cup water
Extra milk (or water) to thin out porridge as desired
Toppings to serve: banana/honey/maple syrup/nut butter/berries/ nuts and seeds/shredded coconut

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place quinoa, oats, ground flaxseed, cinnamon, coconut milk and water in a saucepan. Stir to combine.

2. Cook the porridge over a moderate heat on the sto stirring gently. The porridge should start to bubble and thicken within 12-15 minutes. Reduce the heat if it start bubbling too much. Add a little extra water or milk if th porridge becomes too thick during cooking.

3. Serve the porridge with a drizzle of honey/maple sy and toppings of choice.

Note: make a big batch of quinoa and you can add it your porridge anytime. With pre-cooked quinoa you only need to cook the quinoa porridge for 2-3 minute



Peanut Butter Chia Pudding with cacao nibs and berries

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

This is a really simple and adaptable recipe for overnight chia seed pudding which is bo vegan and gluten free. With only two main ingredients, you can make in under 20 secon Simply mix it before bed, pop it in the fridge, and enjoy it for Suhoor.

Chia seeds are loaded with fibre, protein, omega-3 fatty acids and various micronutrients that can have important benefits for your body, brain and will keep you satisfied for the long day of fasting.

INGREDIENTS

4 tbsp chia seeds
1 cup milk of choice
Toppings to serve:
peanut butter, berries, cacao nibs
Other toppings:
your favourite fruits, nuts & seeds. You can also mix in some yogurt to make it extra creamy. If desired, drizzle honey/maple syrup to taste.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium-sized bowl/tub/jar, gently stir together the chia seeds and milk. Cover and set in the refrigera overnight.

2. At Suhoor, give the chia seed pudding a very good mix, breaking apart any clumps. It's normal for it to ha clumps, but once you give it a good stir, it will become pudding texture.

3. Top with peanut butter, cacao nibs and berries.

You can easily batch cook this. Chia pudding will stay good for about 5 days in the fridge. And if you find that it thickens up a bit too much over time, simply stir in a little milk to thin it out. Super easy.

Family friendly - make the chia pudding in a big bowl and in the morning, portion it out into the individual pots/plates for each family member.



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Homemade Granola

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Yield: about 4 cups

granola makes a wonderful snack or Suhoor option - add your favourite milk
with yogurt and add some fresh fruit. Trust me when I say it's better than
bought stuff - once you make homemade granola, you won't be going back

INGREDIENTS

4 cups oats
1 ½ cup raw nuts and/or seeds (cashews/almonds/walnuts/ hazelnuts/pecans/pumpkin seeds/sunflower seeds/ sesame seeds)
⅔ cup shredded coconut
1 tsp cinnamon
Pinch of salt
½ cup melted coconut oil
½ cup honey or maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
Optional: ⅔ cup dried fruit (cranberries/raisins/apricots) or dark chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/ gas mark 4 and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the oats, nuts and seeds, coconut, salt and cinnamon. Mix well.

3. Pour in the oil, honey/maple syrup and vanilla. Mix well, until every oat and nut is coated. Pour the granola onto your prepared pan and use a large spoon to spread it in an even layer.

4. Bake until lightly golden, around 20-25 minutes, mixing granola halfway (tip: for clumpy granola press the granola down with your spatula to create a more even layer).

5. Let the granola cool completely. Top with dried fruit/chocolate chips if using. Break the granola into pieces with your hands if you want to retain big chunks, or stir around with a spoon if you don't want extra-clumpy granola.

Note: Store the granola in an airtight container at room temperature for 1 - 2 weeks, or in a sealed freezer bag in the freezer for up to 3 months.



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2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the oats, nuts and/o seeds, coconut, salt and cinnamon. Mix well.

3. Pour in the oil, honey/maple syrup and vanilla. Mix well, until every oat and nut is coated. Pour the granola onto your prepared pan and use a large spoon to spre it in an even layer.

4. Bake until lightly golden, around 20-25 minutes, ma granola halfway (tip: for clumpy granola press the stirr granola down with your spatula to create a more even layer).

5. Let the granola cool completely. Top with dried fruit chocolate chips if using. Break the granola into pieces with your hands if you want to retain big chunks, or stir around with a spoon if you don't want extra-clumpy granola.

Note: Store the granola in an airtight container at roo temperature for 1 - 2 weeks, or in a sealed freezer bag the freezer for up to 3 months.



Homemade Granola

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Yield: about 4 cups

This granola makes a wonderful snack or Suhoor option - add your favourite milk o serve with yogurt and add some fresh fruit. Trust me when I say it's better than the store-bought stuff - once you make homemade granola, you won't be going back

INGREDIENTS

4 cups oats
1 ½ cup raw nuts and/or seeds (cashews/almonds/walnuts/ hazelnuts/pecans/pumpkin seeds/sunflower seeds/ sesame seeds)
⅓ cup shredded coconut
1 tsp cinnamon
Pinch of salt
½ cup melted coconut oil
½ cup honey or maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
Optional: ⅔ cup dried fruit (cranberries/raisins/apricots) or dark chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/ gas mark 4 and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the oats, nuts and seeds, coconut, salt and cinnamon. Mix well.

3. Pour in the oil, honey/maple syrup and vanilla. Mix well, until every oat and nut is coated. Pour the granola onto your prepared pan and use a large spoon to spread it in an even layer.

4. Bake until lightly golden, around 20-25 minutes, mixing granola halfway (tip: for clumpy granola press the granola down with your spatula to create a more even layer).

5. Let the granola cool completely. Top with dried fruit/ chocolate chips if using. Break the granola into pieces with your hands if you want to retain big chunks, or stir around with a spoon if you don't want extra-clumpy granola.

Note: Store the granola in an airtight container at room temperature for 1 - 2 weeks, or in a sealed freezer bag in the freezer for up to 3 months.



Veggie Cheesy Crustless Quiche

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Serves: 3-4

This healthy vegetarian crustless quiche makes a perfect suhoor! Easy to prepare, naturally gluten-free and just as tasty hot or cold. Customise it to include your favourite veggies and make it the night before to enjoy at suhoor time.

INGREDIENTS

6 eggs

250ml milk (colored)

Sautéed vegetables (red onion, courgette, mushrooms, spinach, pepper, spring onions)

½ cup cheese (cheddar or feta or both)

1 tsp paprika

½ tsp cumin

1 tbsp Olive Oil

½ tsp garlic powder

Salt + pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F

2. Add olive oil and sauté the vegetables with the salt and seasonings for about 8 minutes until slightly softened. Leave to cool slightly.

3. Break the eggs into a large bowl and add the cheese and milk. Use a whisk to combine well, breaking up the cheese.

4. Add the vegetables and mix together.

5. Transfer to the pie dish. Sprinkle with the crumbled feta cheese (if using).

6. Bake for 40 minutes or until the quiche has set.

7. Leave to cool for 5 minutes then slice and serve warm.



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Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Serves: 3-4

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INGREDIENTS

6 eggs
3 tbsp milk preferred
Sautéed vegetables (red onion, courgette, mushrooms, spinach, pepper, spring onions)
½ cup cheese (cheddar or feta or both!)
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp cumin
1 tbso Olive Oil
½ tsp garlic powder
Salt + pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F

2. Add olive oil and sauté the vegetables with the salt and seasonings for about 8 minutes until slightly softened. Leave to cool slightly.

3. Break the eggs into a large bowl and add the cheese and milk. Use a whisk to combine well, breaking up the cheese.

4. Add the vegetables and mix together.

5. Transfer to the pie dish. Sprinkle with the crumbled feta cheese (if using).

6. Bake for 40 minutes or until the quiche has set.

7. Leave to cool for 5 minutes then slice and serve warm.



Ful Mudammas (Fava Beans)

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

Serves: 3-4

What's a Suhoor meal without the infamous ful mudammas? The king (or Queen) of all Suhoors. It hails from Egypt and is enjoyed as a traditional Suhoor meal across the Middle East.

This hearty bean-based dish is flavoured with cumin, lemon, and olive oil, and brightened by the addition of fresh herbs and vegetables. It is packed with protein, fibre and is an excellent source of folates and minerals like iron, copper, manganese, calcium, magnesium.

INGREDIENTS

1 can foul mudammas (some times called fava beans), rinsed and drained
½ cup (120 ml) water
2 garlic cloves, crushed
½ onion, diced
1 tomato, diced
2 tbsp tahini
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (+ extra for garnish)
½ fresh lemon, juice (+ extra for garnish)
1 tsp cumin
¼ tsp ground black pepper
¼ tsp himalayan salt
4 tablespoons minced fresh parsley/coriander, garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pour the rinsed + drained canned foul mudammas and the water into heavy saucepan. Cook for 3 minutes.

2. Add the crushed garlic, onion, cumin, salt and the pepper. Bring to a boil.

3. Using a potato masher, mash the fava beans partially and cook over low heat for 5 minutes.

4. Add the lemon juice, tahini, 1 tbsp olive oil and half of the chopped tomatoes. Stir, adjust the seasoning and remove from the heat.

5. Put the foul moudamas into a serving dish and top with the rest of the chopped tomatoes, coriander/parsley, lemon juice and rest of the olive oil.

Note: If using dried beans, pre-soak the fava beans the night before. If using canned beans, drain the liquid from cans, add water to rinse away the salty canning liquid, and drain. Repeat this twice. The more times you perform this step, the more salt and preservatives you wash out from the can.



Sweet Potato Hash with Eggs & Feta

[SUHOOR

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Serves: 3

The combination of sweet potato and eggs is literally a game changer. Not only will it balance your blood sugar levels and keep you filled throughout the long day of fasting, but it's so simple and easy to make. You can even use leftover sweet potatoes for a quicker option. You can also mix and match with whatever vegetables you have in your fridge!

INGREDIENTS

2 sweet potatoes, cubed
1 red onion, diced
2 handfuls of spinach
½ red pepper, diced
6 eggs
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil/coconut oil
1 tsp smoked paprika powder
½ cumin powder
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup feta cheese
Small handful of parsley, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add the olive oil, onion, sweet potato, red pepper, paprika, cumin, salt and pepper in a skillet pan. Cook and mix everything well together. If the pan gets dry add a small splash of water. Stir.

2. Cover and cook for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sweet potatoes are tender.

3. Place the spinach, add a splash of water and cover so the spinach will steam. Give it a little stir once or twice so that the sweet potato doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan.

4. Make 6 wells in the mixture, crack the eggs in the wells. Cover and cook for another 10 minutes until the eggs are ready.

5. Remove from heat. Sprinkle the parsley and feta over the top.



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Serves: 3

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INSTRUCTIONS

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4. Make 6 wells in the mixture, crack the eggs in the wells. Cover and cook for another 10 minutes until the eggs are ready.

5. Remove from heat. Sprinkle the parsley and feta over the top.



Nutritious Filling Smoothies

Smoothies are a great alternative when you don't feel like eating at Suhoor - especially when there is a really small window to eat between Iftar and Suhoor. Having a smoothie is the perfect meal as it combines the healthy fats with the fruits/veg and the protein. It is filling, easy, and will power us through the day.

How to build your healthy, nutritious smoothie:

STEP 1: FRUIT

Add 1½ cups of fresh or frozen fruit to your blender – any fruit will work! Frozen fruit gives your healthy smoothie a frosty thickness without having to water down the flavour with ice. Bananas, pineapples, berries and mango work amazingly!

STEP 2: GREENS

Adding 1 cup of greens like kale or spinach gives your smoothie a nutritional boost (+ a beautiful colour). Trust me, you won't notice the taste!

STEP 3: PROTEIN

Add ½ cup of plain full fat yogurt or a scoop of good quality organic protein powder. This is an essential step in your smoothies as this will fill you up and be satisfying!

STEP 4: HEALTHY FATS

Adding one or two tablespoons of ground flaxseeds, chia seeds or nut butter gives the smoothie much more staying power so you don't sip it down and get hungry right after. Avocado is also great in smoothies – just add 1/4 to 1/2 ripe avocado to give it that creamy texture. You can also sprinkle some nuts and seeds on top of your smoothies to give them that boost.

STEP 5: LIQUID

Add 1 cup of liquid to your blender. Options include unsweetened plant-based milks, whole dairy milk or coconut water to help with that electrolyte balance.

STEP 6: FLAVOUR ADD-INS (OPTIONAL)

Take your smoothie to the NEXT LEVEL with flavour add-ins like vanilla extract, lemon zest, cocoa powder, shredded coconut or cinnamon!

Nutritious Filling Smoothies

EXAMPLE COMBINATIONS

Strawberries (1/2 cup) + blueberries (1/2 cup)
+ banana (1/2 cup)+ Greek yogurt
+ chia seeds + almond milk

1 Banana + spinach + peanut butter
+ protein powder + almond milk
+ vanilla

Strawberries (1 cup), frozen berries (1/2 cup)
+ Greek yogurt + flax seeds + milk
+ vanilla + lemon zest



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Nutritious Filling Smoothies

EXAMPLE COMBINATIONS

Strawberries (1/2 cup) + blueberries (1/2 cup) + banana (1/2 cup)+ Greek yogurt + chia seeds + almond milk

1 Banana + spinach + peanut butter + protein powder + almond milk + vanilla

Strawberries (1 cup), frozen berries (1/2 cup) + Greek yogurt + flax seeds + milk + vanilla + lemon zest



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Add 1 cup of liquid to your blender. Options include unsweetened plant-based milks, whole dairy milk or coconut water to help with that electrolyte balance.

STEP 6: FLAVOUR ADD-INS (OPTIONAL)
Take your smoothie to the NEXT LEVEL with flavour add-ins like vanilla extract, lemon zest, cocoa powder, shredded coconut or cinnamon!

[SUHOOR]

Nutritious Filling Smoothies

EXAMPLE COMBINATIONS

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1 Banana + spinach + peanut butter + protein powder + almond milk + vanilla

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SOUPS

Creamy Coconut Vegetable Soup

[IFTAR

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Serves: 4-6

Prepare this easy one pot creamy coconut vegetable soup with fresh vegetables. Wholesome healthy and delicious recipe to make for iftar tonight!

INGREDIENTS

1 tbsp coconut oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 Onion, chopped
2 Carrots, diced
2 Celery Stalks, sliced
1 Tbsp fresh ginger finely grated
3 Garlic Cloves, minced
1 cup vegetable/chicken stock or broth
1 can Coconut Milk
8 Mushrooms, chopped
1 Broccoli, chopped
1 handful fresh parsley
1 tsp cumin power
1 tsp coriander powder
2 tsp dried thyme
Salt & pepper
1 lemon cut into wedges for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, heat coconut oil on medium.

2. Sauté onions, carrots and celery until tender and fragrant.

3. Add garlic, ginger and all herbs & spices, sauté a few minutes to release aroma.

4. Add mushrooms, broccoli, tomato paste, and broth; stir well to combine.

5. Turn heat to high, bring just to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer for 20 minutes, or until vegetables are cooked to your desired tenderness.

6. Add coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes.

7. Serve warm. Garnish with parsley and lemon wedges.



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1 tbsp tomato paste
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2 Carrots, diced
2 Celery Stalks, sliced
1 Tbsp fresh ginger finely grated
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1 Broccoli, chopped
1 handful fresh parsley
1 tsp cumin power
1 tsp coriander powder
2 tsp dried thyme
Salt & pepper
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4. Add mushrooms, broccoli, tomato paste, and broth; stir well to combine.

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6. Add coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes.

7. Serve warm. Garnish with parsley and lemon wedges.



Roasted Red Pepper & Tomato Soup with Pearl Barley

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 55 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Serves: 4-6

A timeless soup that is extremely comforting and packed with vegetables. The roasted red peppers and tomatoes give it such a rich flavour, whilst the balsamic vinegar adds a touch of sweetness complimenting the tomatoes.

INGREDIENTS

2 carrots, sliced
2 sticks of celery, sliced
4 large tomatoes, cut in quarters
2 red peppers, cut in quarters
1 onion, peeled and diced
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
½ cup uncooked pearl barley
1+ ½ cup water
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
700 ml of chicken/vegetable stock (or bone broth)
1 x 400g tin of plum tomatoes
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tsp dried basil
½ tsp thyme
1 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp cumin powder
Pinch of cayenne pepper powder
Salt and pepper
Lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C /400°F/ gas mark 6. Place the tomatoes and red peppers on a baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Put in oven for 15-20 minutes.

2. To cook the pearl barley: Add the pearl barley into a medium pot with 1 ½ cup water over high heat. When the barley has reached a boil, lower the heat to a low simmer, cover, and continue to cook until the barley is done. Start checking at 25 minutes.

3. Heat the olive oil in a large pan over a medium heat, add the carrots, celery, onion and garlic. Add the smoked paprika, garlic powder, cumin powder and cayenne pepper. Then cook with lid ajar for 10 to 15 minutes, or until softened. Add the roasted tomatoes and red peppers. Mix well.

4. Pour the stock to the vegetable pan. Then add the tinned tomatoes with the balsamic vinegar.

5. Give it a good stir and bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes with the lid on.

6. Remove the pan from the heat. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper, then stir in the dried basil and thyme.

7. Using a stick blender or a blender, pulse the soup until smooth.

8. Add the pearl barley and stir well. Taste and check the seasoning, then serve with a lemon wedge.

9. Squeeze in the lemon just before eating.



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½ tsp thyme
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Pinch of cayenne pepper powder
Salt and pepper
Lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

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3. Heat the olive oil in a large pan over a medium heat, add the carrots, celery, onion and garlic. Add the smoked paprika, garlic powder, cumin powder and cayenne pepper. Then cook with lid ajar for 10 to 15 minutes, or until softened. Add the roasted tomatoes and red peppers. Mix well.

4. Pour the stock to the vegetable pan. Then add the tinned tomatoes with the balsamic vinegar.

5. Give it a good stir and bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes with the lid on.

6. Remove the pan from the heat. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper, then stir in the dried basil and thyme.

7. Using a stick blender or a blender, pulse the soup until smooth.

8. Add the pearl barley and stir well. Taste and check the seasoning, then serve with a lemon wedge.

9. Squeeze in the lemon just before eating.



Lentil & Coriander Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Serves: 4 - 6

Comforting and full of goodness. Lentil soup is high in nutrition - lentils are a great source of protein, and their nutty and hearty flavours make them perfect for soups.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup of red split lentils
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
700 ml vegetable stock (or bone broth)
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp garlic powder
A handful of finely chopped parsley
Lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the lentils and drain.

2. In a large pot, heat the olive oil and add the onion, carrot and celery. Cook until it starts to soften. Add the cumin, pepper and garlic powder. Stir well.

3. Add the drained lentils and tomato paste to the pot and stir for 1 minute. Then, add the stock. Stir well.

4. Bring the ingredients to the boil and let simmer for 20 minutes before removing from the heat.

5. You can pulse the soup using a blender for a smooth consistency or leave it whole.

6. Sprinkle the soup with finely chopped coriander and stir well. Serve with a lemon wedge.

7. Squeeze in the lemon just before eating.

Note: Add an extra ½ – 1 cup of water if the consistency is too thick.



Lentil & Coriander Soup

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Cook Time: 25 minutes
Total Time: 35 minutes
Serves: 4 - 6

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INGREDIENTS

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1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
700 ml vegetable stock (or bone broth)
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp garlic powder
A handful of finely chopped parsley
Lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the lentils and drain.

2. In a large pot, heat the olive oil and add the onion, carrot and celery. Cook until it starts to soften. Add the cumin, pepper and garlic powder. Stir well.

3. Add the drained lentils and tomato paste to the pot and stir for 1 minute. Then, add the stock. Stir well.

4. Bring the ingredients to the boil and let simmer for 25 minutes before removing from the heat.

5. You can pulse the soup using a blender to your desired consistency or leave it whole.

6. Sprinkle the soup with finely chopped parsley and stir well. Serve with a lemon wedge.

7. Squeeze in the lemon just before eating.

Note: Add an extra ½ - 1 cup of water for a thinner consistency of the dish.

[IFTAR]

SALADS

Salads don't have to be boring, bland and unsatisfying. These salads are exotic, delicious and filled with vibrant flavours.
The main component to add into any salad to keep you filled and satisfied is **protein**!
Examples can include: quinoa, chicken, eggs, chickpeas or lentils.

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Examples can include: quinoa, chicken, eggs, chickpeas or lentils.

Grilled Aubergine & Pomegranate Salad

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

Try out this simple yet flavoursome salad recipe with roasted aubergine, prepared with pomegranates, tahini and fresh lemon. Great as a starter or side dish within your iftar meal!

INGREDIENTS

1 aubergine
1 tsp garlic powder
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
3 Tbs natural yoghurt
1 Tbs tahini
Juice of ½ lemon
1 handful of pomegranate seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut aubergine into thin slices lengthways. Brush each slice with olive oil and grill in a griddle pan for 2-3 minutes on each side until tender and charred. Place in a serving dish.

2. Dressing: In a small bowl, mix olive oil, garlic powder, pomegranate molasses, and mint.

3. Arrange the aubergine slices on a serving plate, then top with the yogurt, drizzle over the dressing and scatter over the pomegranate seeds.



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3. Arrange the aubergine slices on a serving plate, then top with the yogurt, drizzle over the dressing and scatter over the pomegranate seeds.



Zesty Lime Avocado Salad

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

Lime juice and coriander are the key ingredients to creating this wonderful, healthy no-cook salad you'll want to make all Ramadan long. To make ahead, combine the ingredients except for the avocado and coriander and keep this refrigerated, then add them just before serving.

INGREDIENTS

1 red onion, chopped
2 limes, juice
1 tsp olive oil
¼ tsp salt, black pepper to taste
½ tsp smoked paprika
1 medium tomato, diced
1 medium avocado, diced (about 5 oz)
½ cucumber, chopped
3 tbsp coriander, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a small bowl combine red onion, lime juice, olive oil, salt and pepper.

2. Let them marinate at least 5 minutes to mellow the flavor of the onion.

3. In a large bowl combine avocado, tomato and cucumber.

4. Combine all the ingredients together, add coriander and gently toss. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.



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1. In a small bowl combine red onion, lime juice, olive oil, salt and pepper.

2. Let them marinate at least 5 minutes to mellow the flavor of the onion.

3. In a large bowl combine avocado, tomato and cucumber.

4. Combine all the ingredients together, add coriander and gently toss. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.



Chickpea Quinoa Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

This quinoa salad recipe is very easy to toss together, especially if you use leftover quinoa (e.g. from your quinoa porridge!)

INGREDIENTS

1 cup uncooked quinoa, rinsed and drained
2 cups water
1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1 medium cucumber, seeded and chopped
1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
1 small pomegranate, seeds removed
1 red onion, chopped
Handful of spinach, chopped
1 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped

For the dressing:

¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
½ tsp garlic powder
1 tbsp honey/maple syrup
½ tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To cook the quinoa: Combine the rinsed quinoa and the water in a saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, then decrease the heat to maintain a slow simmer. Cook until the quinoa has absorbed all of the water, about 15 minutes, reducing heat as time goes on to maintain a gentle simmer. Remove from heat, cover. Use a fork to fluff the quinoa.

2. In a large serving bowl, mix the chickpeas, cucumber, bell pepper, pomegranate, onion, spinach and parsley. Set aside.

3. In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic and salt. Mix well until blended.

4. Once the quinoa is mostly cool, add it to the serving bowl, and drizzle the dressing on top. Toss until the mixture is thoroughly combined. Season with black pepper to taste, and add an extra pinch of salt if necessary. For best flavour, let the salad rest for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

This salad keeps well in the refrigerator, covered, for about 3 days. You don't need to use up all of the quinoa in the salad. Save some for other recipes for example the quinoa porridge for breakfast.



Sweet Potato & Freekah Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Total Time: 45 minutes
Serves: 4

This Sweet Potato and Freekah Salad has a lot going on in terms of texture and flavours. Freekah is a charred green wheat that has a lovely nutty taste. If you are gluten intolerant, you can easily use brown rice or quinoa instead.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup uncooked freekah, rinsed and drained
2 cups water
2 sweet potatoes, roasted in oven, cubed
4 tbsp sundried tomatoes in oil, drained and sliced thinly
Handful of spinach, chopped
1 medium cucumber, chopped
¼ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup feta cheese, crumbled

For the dressing:

2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
4 tablespoons of freshly squeezed lemon juice
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
1 pinch of salt
Freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To cook the freekah: combine the freekah and water in a saucepan. Bring to the boil then turn down and simmer for about 25-30 minutes. Keep an eye on the water dissolves too fast you may have to add more. When cooked, the water will have dissolved completely and the freekah will still be a little nutty.

2. In a large serving bowl, mix the sundried tomato, spinach, cucumber and cranberries. Set aside.

3. In a small bowl, combine all dressing ingredients in mixing bowl and whisk.

4. When the freekah is cooked, turn it out into another large mixing bowl, and spread out to allow the grains dry out a bit and cool down completely.

5. Once the freekah is mostly cool, add it to the veg serving bowl, add the roasted sweet potatoes, feta cheese and the nuts. Drizzle the dressing on top. Toss until the mixture is thoroughly combined. Season with black pepper, to taste, and add an extra pinch of salt if necessary.



Sweet Potato & Freekah Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Serves: 4

This Sweet Potato and Freekah Salad has a lot going on in terms of texture and flavours! Freekah is a charred green wheat that has a lovely nutty taste. If you are gluten intolerant, you can easily use brown rice or quinoa here instead!

INGREDIENTS

1 cup uncooked freekah, rinsed and drained
2 cups water
2 sweet potatoes, roasted in oven, cubed
4 tbsp sundried tomatoes in oil, drained and sliced thinly
Handful of spinach, chopped
1 medium cucumber, chopped
¼ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup feta cheese, crumbled

For the dressing:

2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
4 tablespoons of freshly squeezed lemon juice
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
1 pinch of salt
Freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To cook the freekah: combine the freekah with water in a saucepan. Bring to the boil then turn down and gently simmer for about 20-30 minutes. Keep an eye on it, if the water dissolves too fast you may have to add more water. When cooked, the water will have dissolved completely and the freekah will still be a little nutty.

2. In a large serving bowl, mix the sundried tomatoes, spinach, cucumber and cranberries. Set aside.

3. In a small bowl, combine all dressing ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk.

4. When the freekah is cooked, turn it out into another large mixing bowl, and spread out to allow the grains to dry out a bit and cool down completely.

5. Once the freekah is mostly cool, add it to the veg serving bowl, add the roasted sweet potatoes, feta cheese and the nuts. Drizzle the dressing on top. Toss until the mixture is thoroughly combined. Season with black pepper, to taste, and add an extra pinch of salt if necessary.



[IFTAR]

MAINS

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MAINS

Chicken & Chickpea Stew

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Serves: 4-6

This Chicken & Chickpea Stew is an easy, family-friendly iftar meal! You'll love how the flavours come together in this healthy and nutritious meal!

INGREDIENTS

3 chicken breasts, chopped into medium-sized cubes
1 onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 carrots, diced
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 can chickpeas
1 can chopped tomatoes
¼ cup lemon juice
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp smoked paprika
½ tsp cayenne pepper
Salt & pepper
Chopped fresh coriander, to serve.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk in garlic, lemon juice and spices. Add chicken and stir well to coat. Optional: Marinate for 3-4 hours.

2. Heat up oil in a pan/skillet on medium-high heat and add chicken cubes.

3. Cook until nicely browned on all sides, about 2-3 minutes. Remove from pan.

4. Using the same pan on medium-high heat, saute onions, garlic, and carrots for 4-5 minutes.

5. Add tomato paste and tinned tomatoes and mix well for 5-7 minutes.

6. Add chicken and chickpea and mix well. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through, approx for 10-15 minutes.

7. Serve with freshly chopped coriander sprinkled on top & with brown rice.

Note: This recipe lists canned chickpeas in the ingredients, not dried! If you use dried chickpeas, you MUST soak them and cook them first.



Chicken & Chickpea Stew

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Total Time: 40 minutes
Serves: 4-6

This Chicken & Chickpea Stew is an easy, family-friendly iftar meal! You'll love how the flavours come together in this healthy and nutritious meal!

INGREDIENTS

3 chicken breasts, chopped into medium-sized cubes
1 onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 carrots, diced
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 can chickpeas
1 can chopped tomatoes
¼ cup lemon juice
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp smoked paprika
½ tsp cayenne pepper
Salt & pepper
Chopped fresh coriander, to serve.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk in garlic, lemon juice and spices. Add chicken and stir well to coat. Optional: Marinate for 3-4 hours.

2. Heat up oil in a pan/skillet on medium-high heat and add chicken cubes.

3. Cook until nicely browned on all sides, about 2-3 minutes. Remove from pan.

4. Using the same pan on medium-high heat, saute onions, garlic, and carrots for 4-5 minutes.

5. Add tomato paste and tinned tomatoes and mix well for 5-7 minutes.

6. Add chicken and chickpea and mix well. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through, approx for 10-15 minutes.

7. Serve with freshly chopped coriander sprinkled on top & with brown rice.

Note: This recipe lists canned chickpeas in the ingredients, not dried! If you use dried chickpeas, you MUST soak them and cook them first.



Lamb & Okra

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 50 minutes

Serves: 4-6

Lamb and okra (Bamieh) is a classic middle eastern dish that takes me back to my childhood! It's a dish of meat stewed with tomatoes, okra, and spices. Okra is a good source of dietary fibre. It also contains vitamins and minerals, including folate, vitamin K, and potassium.

INGREDIENTS

500g lamb (shoulder) diced
1 large onions, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 lemon, juiced
2 cups veg/chicken stock or water or broth
500g okra (fresh or frozen)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
Salt and pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix cumin and coriander in a small bowl with salt and freshly ground pepper. Rub the meat with half the spice mixture.

2. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat and saute the onion until soft, then add the garlic. Sauté for a couple of minutes then add the lamb and toss until sealed and lightly browned.

3. Add the remaining spices mixture over the meat and season to taste with salt and pepper. Sauté for 5 minutes.

4. Pour the chopped tomatoes, tomato paste and stock/broth over the meat. If you think more liquid is needed, add stock or water. Cover and simmer for 45 mins - 1 hour.

5. Add the okra and cook for another 10 minutes. Add the lemon juice and remove from the heat.

6. Serve warm with brown rice.

Note: If you're using fresh okra, look for small okra pods since they're more tender. Make sure to clean the okra, trim the stem ends on an angle so you don't cut open the pods, and then simmer for about 10 minutes



Cheesy Potato & Tomato Bake

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Serves: 4-6

Potato and Tomato Bake; a combination of richness and a whole lot of flavour and texture, tipping the comfort scale massively.

INGREDIENTS

1 onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
3 tbsp olive oil
3-4 large potatoes, sliced
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground smoked paprika
1 tsp dried basil
Salt and pepper
Mozzarella cheese, grated

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180°C and brush olive oil in a baking dish.

2. For the sauce: blend the chopped tomatoes, onions, garlic, pepper, carrot, olive oil, balsamic vinegar and the herbs and spices in a blender.

3. Arrange a layer of sliced potatoes on the bottom of the baking dish. Then add a layer of the sauce on top of the potato layer.

4. Top that with another layer of potatoes and then the sauce again. (Ending with the sauce as the top layer).

5. Place into heated oven and bake for 1 hour or until potatoes are fork-tender and top is crispy golden brown.

6. Finish by sprinkling mozzarella on top of the dish. Put back into oven for a 2-3 mins until cheese melts.

7. Take out of oven and cut into portions.

Note: If you find that the top is getting too brown, cover with a baking sheet.



Sweet Potato & Chickpea Coconut Curry

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Serves: 4

This sweet potato & chickpea coconut curry is packed with nutrition! It's our favourite easy, healthy, comfort food recipe for this Ramadan!

INGREDIENTS

4 medium sized sweet potatoes, cubed
1 onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
5-6 mushrooms, diced
1 can chickpea, rinsed and drained
3-4 cups baby spinach
1 can coconut milk
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp paprika powder
¼ tsp cinnamon powder

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil over medium high heat. Add the onions and garlic and stir fry until soft and fragrant. Add all the spices and stir to coat. Add in the mushrooms and stir well.

2. Add the sweet potatoes and chickpeas and stir until well-combined.

3. Add the coconut milk and let it simmer over low heat for 20-25 minutes until thickened.

4. Stir in the spinach until wilted.

5. Serve over brown rice or quinoa!



Sesame Garlic Broccoli

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

We have the perfect side dish for you - this sesame garlic broccoli dish is vibrant, delicious and so simple!

INGREDIENTS

1 broccoli, cut into florets
1 red onion, sliced
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 tbsp sesame seeds
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp soy sauce/tamari/ coconut aminos
Chili flakes for garnish, salt and pepper to taste.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add a generous pinch of salt. Add the broccoli and cook for 3 to 5 mins (depends on the size of the florets and amount of florets to water).

2. Once the broccoli is bright green, take off heat, drain and wash with cold water.

3. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium low heat. Add red onion and garlic and mix well for 4 to 5 mins.

4. Add sesame seeds and continue to cook until the seeds start to change color.

5. Add soy sauce and balsamic vinegar and mix well for a few seconds. Add a tbsp of water and mix and take off heat.

6. Drizzle over broccoli or add broccoli to the skillet and mix well. Add chilli flakes, dash of salt and pepper to taste.



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Serves: 4

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2 tbsp sesame seeds
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
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Chili flakes for garnish, salt and pepper to taste.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add a generous pinch of salt. Add the broccoli and cook for 3 to 5 mins (depends on the size of the florets and amount of florets to water).

2. Once the broccoli is bright green, take off heat, drain and wash with cold water.

3. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium low heat. Add red onion and garlic and mix well for 4 to 5 mins.

4. Add sesame seeds and continue to cook until the seeds start to change color.

5. Add soy sauce and balsamic vinegar and mix well for a few seconds. Add a tbsp of water and mix and take off heat.

6. Drizzle over broccoli or add broccoli to the skillet and mix well. Add chilli flakes, dash of salt and pepper to taste.



Balsamic Baked Chicken with Mozzarella

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 55 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Serves: 4

This dish never disappoints - The combination of the balsamic vinegar, basil and tomatoes with chicken is SOMETHING ELSE.

INGREDIENTS

4 skinless chicken breasts

Chicken marinade:

2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp salt
Pinch of cayenne pepper
Freshly ground pepper

Balsamic tomato sauce in pan:

2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp honey
4 cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp dried basil
½ tsp dried thyme
½ tsp onion powder
1- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6

2. Place the chicken into a large mixing bowl and add all marinade ingredients. Massage the chicken so it is full immersed in the marinade. Cover and set aside for 10-15 minutes while you prep the remaining ingredients. (You can marinate the chicken for up to 4 hours in the fridge or you can prepare it the day before)

3. Add all the balsamic tomato sauce ingredients except the mozzarella to a baking dish, along with a big pinch of salt and pepper, and stir well to combine. Move the tomatoes around the edges and place the chicken breasts in the middle.

4. Bake uncovered for 35-40 minutes or until the chicken is almost cooked through. Add the mozzarella cheese to the chicken breasts and leave in the oven just long enough for the cheese to melt.

5. Remove from oven and enjoy with brown rice, burghul or quinoa!



Vibrant Lamb Stew

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 40 minutes

Serves: 4

This lamb dish is filled with an array and abundant of vibrant flavours. Be prepared for your taste buds to go on an experience!

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp olive oil
1kg lamb, diced
4 red potatoes, diced
3 carrots
2 red onions, finely diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp fresh ginger, grated
(or ½ tsp ginger powder)
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp smoked paprika
1 large cinnamon stick
(or ½ tsp cinnamon powder)
1 tbsp honey
2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
½ lemon, juice only
3 tbsp tomato paste
1 can tinned chopped tomatoes
1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 cup hot veg/chicken stock (or bone broth)
Handful coriander, garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat 1tbsp olive oil over a medium heat in a large lidded pot and brown the lamb cubes.

2. Remove the lamb cubes from the pot as they are coloured.

3. When the pot is empty heat the rest of the olive oil and sauté the onions, stirring, for about five minutes until softened.

4. Add the garlic, ginger, carrots, potatoes and spices and stir to release the amazing aromas.

5. Add the lamb to the pot and stir to combine, cooking for 5 minutes.

6. Stir in the lemon juice, tomato paste, honey and pomegranate molasses.

7. Add the chopped tinned tomatoes, chickpeas and hot veg/chicken stock.

8. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to a low simmer. Cover and cook for about 1h -1h 15 mins until the lamb is tender and stew has thickened. If the pan gets too dry, add a little hot water or stock.

9. Enjoy with burghul/brown rice!



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Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 40 minutes

Serves: 4

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½ lemon, juice only
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1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
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(or bone broth)
Handful coriander, garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

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5. Add the lamb to the pot and stir to combine, cooking for 5 minutes.

6. Stir in the lemon juice, tomato paste, honey and pomegranate molasses.

7. Add the chopped tinned tomatoes, chickpeas and hot veg/chicken stock.

8. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to a low simmer. Cover and cook for about 1h -1h 15 mins until the lamb is tender and stew has thickened. If the pan gets too dry, add a little hot water or stock.

9. Enjoy with burghul/brown rice!



Honey Garlic Sticky Salmon

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

Serves: 4

Need a change from chicken and meat? Why not try this quick & easy recipe. Salmon is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, a great source of protein and an excellent source of B vitamins.

INGREDIENTS

4 salmon pieces
2 tbsp honey
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 tbsp olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp sesame seeds
Salt
Fresh grounded black pepper
Pinch of cayenne pepper
½ lemon sliced into wedges, garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C/350°F/ gas mark 4.

2. Season the surface of the salmon with salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper. Set aside.

3. Mix the honey, soy sauce, apple cider vinegar, olive oil, garlic, sesame seeds and a pinch of salt together. Stir to combine well.

4. Place salmon on a baking tray and pour over the marinade.

5. Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes or until the salmon flakes easily with a fork

6. Remove from oven, serve with lemon wedges and enjoy with some roasted veg and quinoa!

Note: Seal and store the salmon in the fridge overnight or for several hours before cooking to allow the salmon to soak up the exciting flavours.



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Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

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INSTRUCTIONS

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2. Season the surface of the salmon with salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper. Set aside.

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Note: Seal and store the salmon in the fridge overnight or for several hours before cooking to allow the salmon to soak up the exciting flavours.



Creamy Lentil Vegetable Curry

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 50 minutes

Total Time: 60 minutes

Serves: 4

This combination of coconut milk and vegetables make this a creamy, luscious, heart-warming dish. You can experiment with any vegetables you might have in your fridge - this example is only a template so go and explore the different tastes and textures of vegetables out there!

INGREDIENTS

1 onion, diced
2 spring onions
3 carrots, chopped
220g green beans, chopped
150g mushrooms, chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp coconut oil (or olive oil)
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 cup vegetable stock
1 cup dried brown lentils
1 can coconut milk
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp ginger
½ tsp turmeric
Pinch cayenne pepper
Pinch salt
Fresh ground black pepper
1 tbs chopped parsley

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, heat the coconut oil and add the onion, spring onions and garlic. Sauté until soft. Add spices. Add carrots, green beans and mushrooms. Sauté while stirring regularly, until the vegetables soften.

2. Add the tomato paste, tomatoes and vegetable stock. Mix with the vegetables and stir the pot a few times. Cook for around 5 minutes.

3. Add the lentils and 1 cup of water to the pot and bring it to boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let simmer for 35-40 minutes, or until the lentils are soft. Stir the pot a few times to prevent the lentils from sticking to the bottom.

4. Stir in the coconut milk. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with parsley. Serve warm with brown rice, quinoa or burghul.

Note: If the curry starts to look dry while cooking, add an extra ½ – 1 cup of water.

Creamy Lentil Vegetable Curry

[IFTAR]

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Cook Time: 50 minutes

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½ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp ginger
½ tsp turmeric
Pinch cayenne pepper
Pinch salt
Fresh ground black pepper
1 tbs chopped parsley

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, heat the coconut oil and add the onion, spring onions and garlic. Sauté until soft. Add spices. Add carrots, green beans and mushrooms. Sauté while stirring regularly, until the vegetables soften.

2. Add the tomato paste, tomatoes and vegetable stock. Mix with the vegetables and stir the pot a few times, for around 5 minutes.

3. Add the lentils and 1 cup of water to the pot and bring it to boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it simmer for 35-40 minutes, or until the lentils are soft. Stir the pot a few times to prevent the lentils from sticking to the bottom.

4. Stir in the coconut milk. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Garnsih with parsley. Serve warm with brown rice, quinoa or burghul.

Note: If the curry starts to look dry while cooking, add an extra ½ – 1 cup of water.





[IFTAR]

GRAINS

COOKING WHOLEGRAINS FROM SCRATCH

Cooking grains is easy, but remembering how to cook each specific grain in whole grain recipes is not. Below is all the info you'll need telling you exactly how to cook your favorite whole grains!

Pearl Barley
To cook: Add 3 cups water or vegetable broth to 1 cup barley, bring to a boil, then simmer for 45-60 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 ½ cups.

Brown Rice
To cook: Add 1 and ½ cups water or vegetable broth to 1 cup brown rice, bring to a boil, then simmer for 25-45 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Bulgur Wheat
To cook: Add 2 cups water to 1 cup bulgur, bring to a boil, then simmer for 10-12 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Couscous
To Cook: Bring 1 1/4 cup water (or vegetable broth) to a boil (either kettle or stove). Add boiled water to 1 cup whole-wheat couscous in a bowl. The couscous will soak the liquid up in 5 minutes or less. Fluff with a fork.

Quinoa
To cook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup quinoa, bring to a boil, then simmer for 12-15 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Freekah
To cook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup freekah, bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Millet
To cook: Add 2 and 1/2 cups water to 1 cup millet, bring to a boil, then simmer for 25-35 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 4 cups.



[IFTAR]

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Millet
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[IFTAR]

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n rice, bring to a oil, then simmer for 25-45 minutes.
unt after cooking: 3 cups.

ur Wheat
ook: Add 2 cups water to 1 cup bulgur, bring to a boil, then
er for 10-12 minutes.
unt after cooking: 3 cups.

scous
ook: Bring 1 1/4 cup water (or vegetable broth) to a boil
r kettle or stove). Add boiled water to 1 cup whole-wheat
scous in a bowl. The couscous will soak the liquid up in
nutes or less. Fluff with a fork.

noa
ook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup quinoa, bring to a boil, then
mer for 12-15 minutes.
ount after cooking: 3 cups.

ekah
ook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup freekah, bring to a boil, then
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let
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n simmer for 25-35 minutes.
ount after cooking: 4 cups.



[IFTAR]

GRAINS

COOKING WHOLEGRAINS FROM SCRATCH

Cooking grains is easy, but remembering how to cook each specific grain in whole grain recipes is not. Below is all the info you'll need telling you exactly how to cook your favorite whole grains!

Pearl Barley
To cook: Add 3 cups water or vegetable broth to 1 cup barley, bring to a boil, then simmer for 45-60 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 ½ cups.

Brown Rice
To cook: Add 1 and ½ cups water or vegetable broth to 1 cup brown rice, bring to a boil, then simmer for 25-45 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Bulgur Wheat
To cook: Add 2 cups water to 1 cup bulgur, bring to a boil, then simmer for 10-12 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Couscous
To Cook: Bring 1 1/4 cup water (or vegetable broth) to a boil (either kettle or stove). Add boiled water to 1 cup whole-wheat couscous in a bowl. The couscous will soak the liquid up in 5 minutes or less. Fluff with a fork.

Quinoa
To cook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup quinoa, bring to a boil, then simmer for 12-15 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Freekah
To cook: add 2 cups water to 1 cup freekah, bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 3 cups.

Millet
To cook: Add 2 and 1/2 cups water to 1 cup millet, bring to a boil, then simmer for 25-35 minutes.
Amount after cooking: 4 cups.

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SNACKS & DESSERTS

Dates are [illegible]taple component in Ramadan. Here are two ways you can jazz them up!
Dates should[illegible] limited to only at Iftar time, we should enjoy them after Iftar as a snack or at
S[illegible] where they are paramount to provide us with immense energy.

Nut butter & Dark chocolate Stuffed Dates

INGREDIENTS
12 dates
Half cup of 100% peanut butter or almond butter
Pieces of 75% (or higher) Dark chocolate
Sprinkle of sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS
Split a date in half (+remove pit).
Fill each date with natural nut butter (approximate
1 heaped teaspoon) and chopped dark chocolate.
Sprinkle a little salt. Done. ENJOY.

Creamy Tahini Coconut Stuffed Dates

INGREDIENTS
12 dates
Half a cup of Tahini
Shredded coconut
Pinch of cardamom powder

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Split a date in half (+remove pit). In a small bowl mix the tahini, shredded coconut and cardamom together. Stuff each date with approximately 1 heaped teaspoon of the tahini mix, placing them on a tray/plate as you go.
2. Once all the dates have been stuffed, place in the freezer for 30 minutes - 1 hour to firm up.
3. Enjoy! These can be kept in the fridge or freezer.

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Gluten-free Chocolate Brownies

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 10-12 pieces

Conscious indulgences for Ramadan?
You need to make these Gluten Free Chocolate Brownies!

INGREDIENTS

2 cups almond flour
½ cup cacao powder
2 tsp baking powder
Pinch of salt
2 eggs
¼ cup coconut oil, melted
¼ cup maple syrup/ honey
½ cup milk (or plant-based milk)
1 cup dark chocolate chips
1 tsp vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180 C and prepare a baking pan with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, mix the almond flour, cacao powder, baking powder and salt together.

3. In another separate bowl, mix together the eggs, coconut oil, maple syrup/honey, milk and vanilla extract.

4. Pour egg mixture onto the almond flour mixture. Mix all well together. Gently fold in the chocolate chips.

5. Pour the batter into the pre-prepared baking pan and bake for 20-25 minutes. Depending on the oven you have the baking time may vary. You'll want to check the brownies from minute 15 to make sure you aren't overbaking them. The centre has to be slightly moist when touching.

6. Remove from the oven and let keto brownies cool for about 10 minutes before cutting up.



Tahini Chocolate Bars

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 8-10 bars

These Tahini Chocolate Bars have a luscious thick chocolate base and the creamiest melt-in-your-mouth tahini filling. You can make it gluten free by including gluten free oats and make it dairy free for opting for plant-based milk! Your iftar guests will be WOW'd!

INGREDIENTS

For the base:
2 cups oat flour
(blend oats in a blender)
1 tsp baking powder
1/3 cup tahini
¼ cup maple syrup/honey
¼ cup cacao powder
¼ milk (or unsweetened plant-based milk)
Pinch of salt

For the top tahini layer:
¼ cup tahini
¼ cup maple syrup/honey
¼ coconut oil, melted

For the chocolate drizzle:
40 g dark chocolate
1 tsp coconut oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180 C and line a baking tray with parchment paper.

2. Mix all of the ingredients for the base in a bowl

3. Transfer the batter to the baking tray and bake for 10 minutes.

4. While the base is baking, mix all of the ingredients for the tahini layer in a bowl.

5. Once the base is done, pour the tahini mixture over the top and place in the fridge for at least an hour, or until the tahini layer is solid.

6. Place the dark chocolate and coconut oil in a bowl and microwave for 20-seconds increments until it's melty. Mix together and then drizzle over the top.

7. Store in the fridge.



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Chocolate Chip Banana Bread

Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 40 minutes
Total Time: 55 minutes
Servings: 10 slices

...re on the hunt for the BEST chocolate chip banana bread...then look no further. ...his one is so incredibly moist, flavorful, and loaded with dark chocolate chips.

INGREDIENTS

3 overripe bananas, mashed
3 eggs
2 cups almond flour
¼ cup coconut oil
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1 cup dark chocolate chips
4 tbsp honey/maple syrup (optional: I usually don't add this as the choco chips provide adequate sweetness for me)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven at 180C.

2. Line a loaf tin with parchment paper or lightly ... with coconut oil.

3. In a bowl, beat eggs and add mashed banana...

4. Add vanilla extract, coconut oil and honey if using. Mix well.

5. In a separate bowl mix together the almond flour, baking soda and cinnamon.

6. Combine the two mixtures together until well blended. Fold in the chocolate chips and gently stir them in.

7. Pour the batter and bake for 40 minutes. Use a tester or a toothpick, if it comes out clean it is cooked! Let cool for at least 30 minutes before ...

Enjoy!



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7. Pour the batter and bake for 40 minutes. Use a tester or a toothpick, if it comes out clean then it's cooked! Let cool for at least 30 minutes before serving Enjoy!



Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Swirls

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 20 pieces

These bars have a crispy oat crust base and are filled with creamy peanut [illegible] dark chocolate. You can freeze these beauties, so they are batch cook [illegible]

INGREDIENTS

Crust:

1 cup oats (use gluten-free if sensitive/intolerant)
1 cup oat flour (simply blend oats in a blender)
2 medium sized ripe bananas, mashed
3 tbsp honey or maple syrup
4 tbsp smooth 100% peanut butter
1 tsp vanilla extract

Topping:

140g 70% (or higher) dark chocolate, melted
2 tbsp smooth peanut butter
1 tbsp coconut oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line the bottom of a 9x9 inch square pan with parchment paper. Set aside.

2. Combine the oats and the oat flour together in a bowl.

3. In the separate bowl, add the mashed banana, honey/maple syrup, smooth peanut butter and vanilla extract. Mix well until you get a smooth mixture.

4. Add peanut butter banana mixture into the oats and stir until evenly combined.

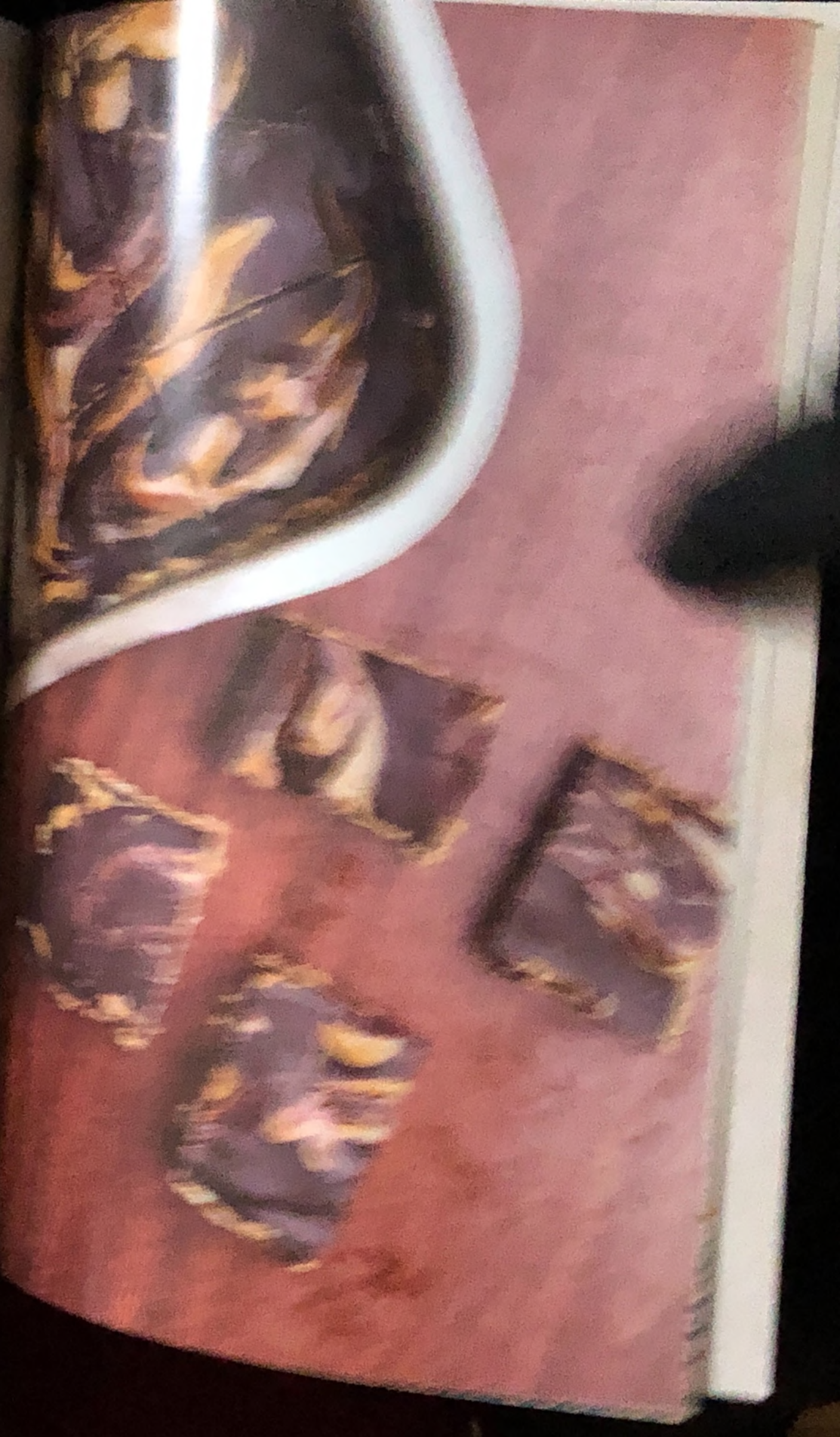
5. Transfer mixture to the prepared pan. Press down using the back of a spoon to press it evenly across the bottom of the pan. Place in freezer for 15 minutes.

6. Meanwhile, combine the topping ingredients together and melt either in a microwave or on the stove.

7. Let it cool for few minutes then spread the melted chocolate mixture on top of the oat case. To create the swirls: add some peanut butter across the top and use a tooth pick or end of your spoon to swirl the chocolate and peanut butter together.

8. Freeze again until chocolate is firm enough to cut into bars.

Note: Keep in an airtight container refrigerated for up to [illegible]



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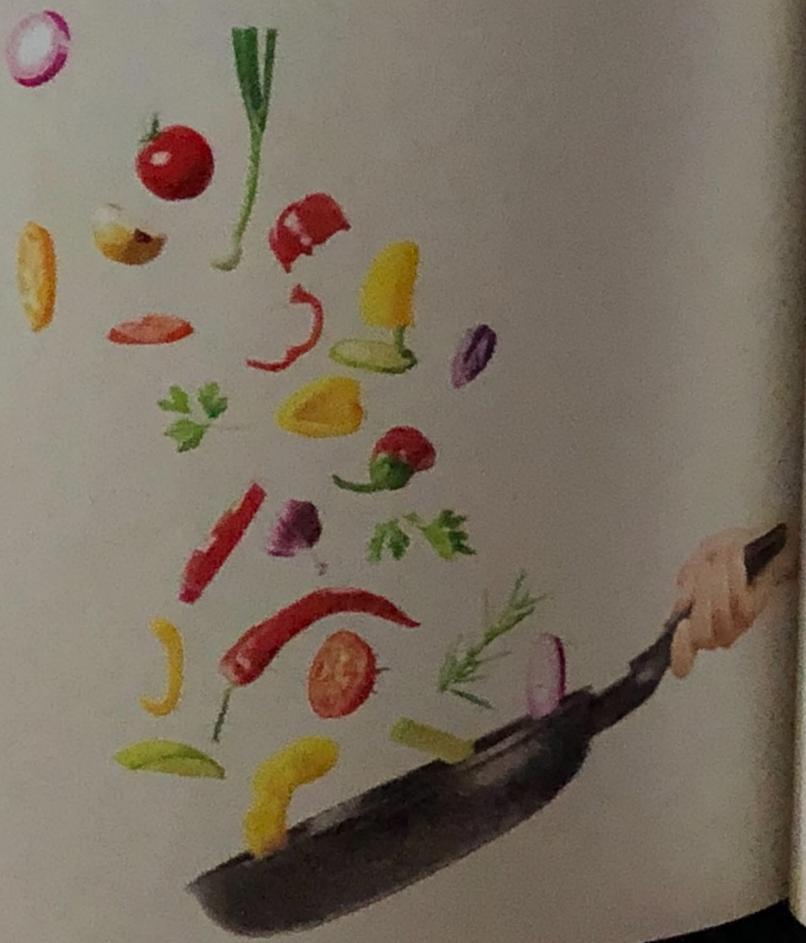
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RAMADAN MEAL PLANNER

Use this section to plan ahead for your meals. This allows you to ensure your meals are balanced, and takes the pressure off you so that you can make the most of Ramadan!



'You w… believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed… those before you, so that you be mindful of God' (Quran 2:183)

[WEEK 1]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 1]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

O you who believe, eat from the pure things that We provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.
(Quran 2:172)

[WEEK 2]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Ali ibn
n ibn Wafid said: 'Allah put all medicine into half an
n He said: 'Eat and drink, but not excessively'
(Quran: 7:31)

[WEEK 3]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 2]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 3]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 2]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 3]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Harith Ibn Kalada, the physician of the Arabs, was once asked: 'What is the best medicine?' He replied, 'Necessity – that is, hunger'

[WEEK 4]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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[WEEK 4]

	Suhoor	Iftar	Snacks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

